

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-16

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AGR-20 EB-11 COME-00 TRSE-00 AID-20

SWF-02 CIAE-00 INR-11 NSAE-00 RSC-01 IGA-02 DRC-01

/085 W

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R 191245Z SEP 74

FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9053

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E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: BTRA (QUENTIN M. WEST) EG

SUBJ: US/EGYPTIAN JOINT COOPERATION COMMISSION-
AGRICULTURE JWG

REF: STATE 193322

FOR NEA/EGY

DEPT PASS AGR FOR QUENTIN WEST

1. SUMMARY-USDA OFFICIALS QUENTIN WEST AND RALPH MCCRACKEN
VISITED CAIRO SEPTEMBER 16 TO 19 IN CONNECTION WITH THEIR
WORK ON THE JWG FOR AGRICULTURAL COOPERATION. WEST AND
MCCRACKEN WERE THE FIRST JWG VISITORS TO DISCUSSIONS
IN CAIRO UNDER THE JWG FRAMEWORK. AS SUCH THEY RECEIVED
HIGH LEVEL TREATMENT IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND
SAW DR. ABD-AL AZIZ HEGAZI, FIRST DEP PRIMIN,
IN A MEETING ARRANGED BY DR. EFFAT, THE COORDINATOR FOR
AMERICAN ASSISTANCE. WHILE VISIT WAS TO HAVE BEEN A
PREPARATORY MEETING FOR THE EARLY OCTOBER RETURN TO
WASHINGTON OF THE JWG, THE OUTCOME WAS FULL BLOWN
CONTINUATION OF DISCUSSIONS HELD BETWEEN WEST AND SALAH TEWFIK,
UNDERSECRETARY OF STATE FOR AGRICULTURE, IN AUGUST. AGREED
MINUTE WAS PREPARED. END SUMMARY
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2. MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE ARRANGED INTENSIVE TWO DAYS OF BRIEFINGS FOR USDA OFFICIALS WEST AND MCCRACKEN WHICH DWELT WITH ALL ASPECTS OF EGYPTIAN AGRICULTURE AND FOCUSED ON THE PACKAGE OF REQUESTS WHICH THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE HAD PREPARED FOR THE AUGUST MEETING. EGYPTIANS WERE EXTREMELY WELL-PREPARED. WEST AND MCCRACKEN AGREED TO THE PREPARATION OF A JOINT MINUTE WHICH THEY ARE CARRYING WITH THEM. ESSENTIALLY DOCUMENT (A) RESTATES AGREED AREAS OF DISCUSSIONS; (B) DIVIDES EGYPTIAN PROPOSALS INTO TWO CATEGORIES, THOSE REQUIRING TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND THOSE REQUIRING INVESTMENT; (C) MENTIONS THE CONSIDERATION OF FERTILIZERS, PESTICIDES AND FEED GRAINS UNDER COMMODITY PURCHASE AGREEMENTS; (D) AGREES THAT THE US SHOULD MOUNT A MISSION TO ASSESS WITH EGYPTIAN COUNTERPARTS THE DEVELOPMENTAL REQUIREMENTS OF EGYPTIAN AGRICULTURE WITH A VIEW TO PROMOTING A PROGRAM OF COOPERATION; (E) MENTIONS THE POSSIBILITY OF AID SENDING A THREE MAN TEAM TO PROVIDE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE IN LAND RECLAMATION, DRAINAGE AND HYDROLOGY "WITHIN THE NEXT TWO MONTHS".

3. WEST, IN HIS DISCUSSIONS POINTED OUT THE BASIS INABILITY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE TO MOVE WITHOUT THE FINANCIAL SUPPORT OF AID. ALTHOUGH MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE OFFICIALS ACKNOWLEDGE THIS EXPLANATION, IT WAS CLEAR FROM DISCUSSIONS THAT THEY HOLD HIGH HOPES OF HEAVY US INVOLVEMENT IN AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT IN EGYPT.

4. DURING MEETING WITH IRST DEPT PRIMIN, DR. HEGAZI ASSURED USSDAO OFFICIALS THAT AGRICULTURE HAD HIGH PRIORITY IN EGYPTIAN DEVELOPMENT PLANS. WEST TOLD US HE OBSERVED THAT THE IMPRESSION IN WASHINGTON WAS THAT AGRICULTURE HAD A RATHER LOW PRIORITY, HEGAZI REPLIED THAT THIS WOULD HAVE TO BE CORRECTED.

5. COMMENT: WHAT WAS SUPPOSED TO HAVE BEEN PREPARATORY MEETING TURNED INTO FULL BLOWN JWG SESSION THANKS TO EAGERNESS OF MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE OFFICIALS. WEST AND MCCRACKEN SOUGHT TO BE REALISTIC IN TERMS OF WHAT COULD BE EXPECTED IN WAY OF ACTUAL ASSISTANCE IN THIS AREA, BUT REACTION OF MINISTRY OFFICIALS UNDERLINES LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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GREAT EXPECTATIONS WHICH WE ARE FACING IN EGYPTIAN BUREAUCRACY IN THIS AND OTHER JWG'S.

6. WE WOULD APPRECIATE PRIORITY ATTENTION BEING GIVEN BY AID TO SUGGESTION THAT SMALL TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TEAM BE SENT OUT IN THE FIELD OF HYDROLOGY IN ADVANCE OF THE MAIN ASSESSMENT TEAM TALKED ABOUT IN THE WASHINGTON DISCUSSIONS. BELIEVE THAT THIS COULD

BE OF THREE TO FOUR WEEK DURATION AND COULD BE PAID
FOR OUT OF EXCESS CURRENCY FUNDS. THIS WOULD HAVE
POSITIVE IMPACT ON AGRICULTURE OFFICIALS AND WOULD
BE IMPORTANT STEP IN KEEPING MOMENTUM GOING IN
THIS INTRISINICALLY IMPORTANT AREA OF COOPERATION.
WE WOULD HOPE TO SEE SUCH TEAM RETURN WITH EGYPTIAN
DELEGATION FROM EARLY OCTOBER MEETINGS IN WASHINGTON.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptoning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 19 SEP 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: cunninfx
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974CAIRO07321
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740264-0267
From: CAIRO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740933/aaaabbjc.tel
Line Count: 123
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: STATE 193322
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: cunninfx
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 14 AUG 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <14-Aug-2002 by cunninfx>; APPROVED <04 MAR 2003 by cunninfx>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: US/EGYPTIAN JOINT COOPERATION COMMISSION- AGRICULTURE JWG
TAGS: BTRA, EG, (QUENTIN M WEST)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005